

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD**

**SUBJECT: Testimony for the Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee**

1. On 20 January 1959 the Director with   ONE, and Mr. Houston discussed with

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Edwin Weisl, Sr. and Cyrus R. Vance, Special Consultants to the Senate Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Armed Services Committee

Kenneth E. Belieu, Staff Director, and Max Lehrer, Assistant Staff Director, Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee

the testimony which the Director would give before the Senate Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee on 29 January. It was confirmed that the meeting would be at 10 a.m., Friday, 29 January (Mr. Belieu will let us know if it goes back to 10:30) and that they will recess at 12:15 p.m. to let Mr. Dulles attend a luncheon of the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities and resume at 2:30 p.m.

2. Discussion started with Mr. Vance's comments about Secretary Gates' testimony which is stated to have been drawn from the CIA estimate on the Russian ICBM program. They cited Mr. Gates as saying that Soviet accuracy was inferior to ours and that for the first time intelligence has more accurate information on the Soviet stockpile. Mr. Dulles pointed out

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that this was in the open record and that in his classified testimony Mr. Gates would be more specific and consistent with intelligence estimates. Mr. Dulles commented on the various sources of our information at the present time and mentioned the remark Khrushchev made to Vice President Nixon about one of the ICBM firings being a runaway shot and that they had feared it would land in some area that would be troublesome. He asked the group to keep this story in confidence.

3. Mr. Dulles commented generally that the Russian CEP may not be quite as good as the Atlas. [ ] gave some details stating that we presently thought that with a radio inertial guidance system the Russian CEP was about three nautical miles, and with the all inertial system about five nautical miles. By 1963 we felt the all inertial system might be two nautical miles and the radio inertial somewhat better. Mr. Lehrer asked if we felt any of the 15 firings of the last year were operational in the sense that they were fired with trained troops on firing sites. Mr. Dulles said he felt that they were still test firing from Tyura Tam and probably not with troops although they could be training troops at that site. Mr. Weisl said there was a contention that we have more successful tests of ICBM's than the Russians, and the Director said that such comparative figures were not our job, that we just estimated the Russian firings.

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4. [ ] gave a description of some of the factors that go into the formula for estimating the CEP, and Mr. Lehrer asked some questions about the factor of the accuracy of target locations. [ ] pointed out that this was a relatively minor factor and that both the Russians and ourselves would have error in interpolating each others geographic systems. [ ]

[ ] in answer to a question said that our estimate of the Soviet reliability factor was that in-flight reliability was now from 55 to 75 per cent and within three years we would expect it to be 70 to 85 per cent. He pointed out that some do not get off but that we felt the on-launcher reliability was 80 per cent at the initial operational capability on 1 January 1960 and might be 90 per cent in three years.

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5. Mr. Weisl said that there seemed to be some divergence between what Mr. Gates was saying and our estimates and what access did he have to our information. Mr. Dulles pointed out that

Mr. Gates would have all our information and that the estimates are agreed on with some specified disagreement in certain areas.

6. Mr. Weisl commented that possibly the CEP was not so important for us as we had the problem of retaliation against large cities opposed to the Russian's problem of aiming for our launching sites and SAC installations. Mr. Dulles commented that Mr. Khrushchev says he has enough missiles for both purposes. Mr. Weisl asked if the Russians knew our capability, and Mr. Dulles said if they do they do not tell their people or publicize it.

7. Mr. Lehrer asked if they might have a copy of the National Intelligence Estimate, not to take with them but to study here. Mr. Dulles pointed out that he really could not do this as a matter of principle and because of the precedent it might set in other cases and that in any case he would need the permission of the National Security Council. He said they would try to have a prepared statement ready for his opening on 29 January in time to discuss it with them in advance so that all the points they wanted would be made in it.

8. Mr. Vance asked if we had gone into the warhead estimate, and Mr. Dulles said yes, we put it at 6,000 pounds. Mr. Vance asked about yield, and Mr. Dulles said while this information was restricted he would tell this group that the yield was in the multi-megaton range although he would not necessarily so testify before the Committee.

9. Mr. Lehrer quoted Secretary Gates as saying that Russia's missiles were inferior to ours and asked if so how much. Mr. Dulles said he would testify on this point but advised that it would be unwise to get into a comparison of missile strength alone as he felt that the U. S. was superior in over-all strength and this is what really counted.

10. The question was asked how we assess Khrushchev's statements. Mr. Dulles said that as a rule of thumb where he is talking about existing factual situations widely known in his own country he is pretty accurate, but when he speaks of the future his fancy roams particularly in connection with agriculture, somewhat less so in the field of weapons. He made available to the group copies of the full text of Khrushchev's speech.

25X1 11. Mr. Belieu asked about our estimate of rocket thrust, and [ ] stated that we estimated the weight of the Soviet ICBM to be 550,000 pounds at take-off with a 6,000 pound warhead. Mr. Belieu speculated that maybe we didn't have to worry about differences in CEP when we were talking about warheads of this size. Mr. Vance said that if we estimated that the Russian initial operational capability for ICBM's was 10 on 1 January 1960 what were the numbers for 1961, 1962, and 1963. Mr. Dulles and

25X1 [ ] said we estimated that by mid-1961 there would be 140 to 200 on-launcher missiles with trained crews and that by mid-1962 there would be 250 to 350. [ ] pointed out that there would be more in reserve and for test purposes--some-what over 100. Mr. Belieu asked if we had any information on launching sites, and the Director said we did not. Mr. Vance asked about mobility, and Mr. Dulles stated that since we believed they were using a liquid fuel we did not think they could be fully mobile. Even if they were movable there would be some sites with some apparatus for fueling and other needs. He said we had no evidence they were using solid fuels.

25X1 12. Mr. Lehrer asked if we felt that our current estimates were of better quality than previous ones, and Mr. Dulles stated that he felt they were because of the 15 tests we had observed and we had more information from various sources including Khrushchev's speeches. [ ] said we had considerably more information on the firing process. Mr. Lehrer asked whether we could state a margin of error in our estimates, and Mr. Dulles said not much on error on the actual tests but that the estimates on CEP and projection of numbers were less firm. [ ] said that on the CEP we could be reasonably sure of the theoretical conclusions but that the operational degradation was a matter of judgment and we could not put a percentage on it. Some of our manufacturers in this field would claim that there was no degradation but we feel that there would be in actual operations. Mr. Vance asked how much we knew about the actual missiles themselves, and [ ] said we know they have one of three types of guidance systems--the pure radio in which all corrections are computed on the ground and feed in direction by radio directly to the control mechanism of the missile (this is the most accurate guidance system); the radio inertial, in which part of the computer function is in the missile; and the pure inertial, in which all guidance components including computer are in the missile. He was asked if our conclusions

25X1 were based on our own experience of such guidance systems or the Soviet's, and [ ] said based on what we believe they are using.

25X1 13. Mr. Dulles excused himself and the conversation turned to our conclusions as to the accuracy of our estimates. Mr. Lehrer asked if a percentage of error figure on our estimates could be stated. [ ] said that since there was a large element of judgment involved it would be extremely difficult to put any numerical figure on the question of accuracy of our estimates. Mr. Lehrer persisted as to how we could estimate their production rate or know their requirements. [ ] said we are going on the assumption that there is but one plant manufacturing ICBM's now and that there may be two plants by 1963. He stated that we take all the information we know of their current situation and forecast with the most expert advice we can the probable rate of expansion of production. Mr. Lehrer continued to ask how we reached this or that conclusion, and Mr. Houston informed the group that to go into the question of the accuracy of our estimates would require a review and understanding of the entire evaluation and estimative process; that it was a complicated process with many facets, some based on firm information, some on expert analysis, and others on assumptions or interpretations by trained personnel all culminating in the application of the judgment of the entire intelligence complex; and that if the estimative system and the people employed therein were good the estimate would have a reasonable degree of accuracy.

25X1 14. The Director rejoined the group for a few minutes to say goodby.

S/ Lawrence R. Houston

LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel

N. B. Mr. Belieu has since stated that the Committee does not want a prepared statement.

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